

History of the rise and progress of the Alton riots

HISTORY OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE ALTON RIOTS, CULMINATING IN THE DEATH OF REV, ELIJAH P. LOVEJOY, *November 7th, 1837.*

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HENRY TANNER.

BUFFALO: PRINTING HOUSE OF JAMES D. WARREN.

Office of the "Buffalo Commercial Advertiser."

1878.

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To The Buffalo Historical Society.

Gentlemen, —I desire to deposit with you a book called "The Alton Trials," being a copy of indictment and trial of Winthrop S. Gilman, who was indicted with Enoch Long, Amos B. Roff, George H. Walworth, George H. Whitney, William Harned, John S. Noble, James Morse, Jr., Henry Tanner, Royal Weller, Reuben Gerry and Thaddeus B. Hurlbut, for the crime of riot, committed on the night of the 7th of November, A. D. 1837, while engaged in defending a printing press from an attack made on it by a mob. The notes of trial were taken and written out by a member of the bar of the Alton Municipal Court. Also, the trial of John Solomon, Levi Palmer, Horace Beall, Josiah Nutter, Jacob Smith, David Butler, William Carr and James M. Rock, indicted with James Jennings, Solomon Morgan and Frederick Bruchy, for a riot committed in Alton on the night of the 7th of November, A. D. 1837, in unlawfully and forcibly entering the warehouse of Godfrey, Gilman & Co., and breaking up and destroying a printing press. These notes were also written out at the time of trial by William S. Lincoln, a member of the bar of the Alton Municipal Court. With this book I also deposit with you the history of the times in which this occurred as connected therewith, and with the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, who was murdered by this mob. Taking the leading events connected with Mr. Lovejoy in the few preceding years that culminated on this fatal 7th of November, my object is to save from oblivion the history of those days and events, and to place them in your custody for safe keeping and future reference; but in narrating the origin and progress of the events which led to the murder of Lovejoy, although myself an actor in his defence, I must of necessity borrow much from publications of the times and from individuals who were connected therewith. To A. W. Cory, Esq., of Godfrey, Ill., I am indebted for a copy of what was called the *Alton Observer*, the name of Lovejoy's paper, but this number was published in Cincinnati soon after Lovejoy's death; also to L. A. Parks, Esq., editor of the *Alton Telegraph*, and to Abraham Breath, Esq., of

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Alton, Ill., I am indebted for favors and for their personal recollections of events in which they were all prominent actors.

The history of the Alton riots would not be complete without the early life of Mr. Lovejoy, whose genuine Christian character has been little known and still less understood.

Rev. Elijah Parish Lovejoy was born in Albion, Maine, November 8th, 1802. He would have been thirty-five years old the day after he was murdered. He was a son of Rev. Daniel Lovejoy, a Congregational minister. He was a graduate of Waterville College, and soon after graduating he emigrated to St. Louis, Mo., where for several years he taught a school. Subsequently he became editor of *The St. Louis Times*, and advocated the election of Henry Clay for the Presidency. His writings exhibited talents of a very high order and were appreciated by his co-workers. During this period Mr. Lovejoy was what is denominated a sceptic, though far from being an infidel; but in a revival of religion in St. Louis, in 1832, he was converted, and soon after he entered Princeton Theological Seminary, and ending his studies there, was licensed to preach as a Congregational minister, but was soon thereafter induced to return to St. Louis and take the editorial charge of the *St. Louis Observer*. His connection with that paper commenced November 11th, 1833. His course as an editor was bold and fearless, exhibiting great courage in what was to his mind, duty. He soon found himself in controversy with Romanism, getting the ill-will of many of that faith in St. Louis, by his strong denunciation of the use of the United States soldiers stationed there, and of the use of the American flag in the public dedication of the Roman Catholic cathedral of St. Louis. And by them he was in turn denounced as an Abolitionist, although at this time he was the farthest removed from that faith. But the cry was raised against him, a Northern man in a slave city and state, and for an object, and it had its effect. His office was for a time closed in consequence of the excitement growing out of this. He denounced his persecutors and made a powerful, patriotic and, for the time being, effectual appeal to the public of St. Louis, that produced reaction in his favor. At this time Lovejoy was contemplating removing his office and press to Alton,

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and had taken some steps in that direction; had visited Alton and held consultations with citizens, but no decision I think had been made respecting it.

But now came the murder in St. Louis of a black man by the name of McIntosh, who was a deck hand on a steamer lying at the levee, and in retaliation for abuse which he could no longer endure, stabbed and killed a *white man*. For this high-handed offense the black man was chained to a tree or stump and burned to death by the mob, in that city. This crime was justified by the city judge, whose name was Lawless,—a good name for the occasion. Mr. Lovejoy, whose office had been re-opened in St. Louis, handled this act of the mob, and the charge of Judge Lawless with severity, sparing neither language nor energy in denouncing both. This so exasperated the mob that the old cry of abolition was again raised against him, and his office destroyed.

Mr. Lovejoy, now in earnest for another place to establish his paper, where he could fire into the enemies of peace and good order, for he was by no means beaten, turned to Alton as a base of operation, being the nearest town to St. Louis, and in a free state, but previous to removing there he had a meeting with a number of citizens of Alton, representing the business and the property of the city to a great degree. They questioned him as to his course in regard to slavery, should he come among them to publish his paper, for but few of them were then Abolitionists. Mr. Lovejoy's answers were characteristic of the man. He said, slavery is a subject that ought faithfully to be discussed in our religious and political journals, and as an editor he should never relinquish his right to discuss that or any other subject he might think it his duty to discuss. "I do not know," said he, "that I shall feel it my duty to discuss it here, as fully as I did in St. Louis; there, where its enormities were constantly before me, I felt bound to lift up my voice against it, as in the murder of McIntosh. This I claim as my constitutional right, a right which I shall never relinquish to any man or body of men. But to discuss the subject of slavery is not the object of my paper, except as a great moral subject in connection with others. My object is to publish a religious journal which shall be instructive and profitable to my fellow-citizens.

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As to the subjects I shall discuss, and the manner of doing them, I shall ever claim the right of determining for myself, always accepting counsel from others with thankfulness.”

This was all plain and well understood, and Mr. Lovejoy was cordially welcomed as a citizen of Alton. But notwithstanding all this, the night after the press was landed it was destroyed, it having been left on the bank of the river over night, the building for its use not being ready to receive it, and no one dreaming of any trouble towards it. A public meeting of the citizens was called the following day, and the sentiments expressed on the outrage committed were so strong, and the noble stand to defend the law at all hazards so firmly taken, that the reputation of Alton as a law-abiding city, both abroad and at home, was very high. At this meeting Mr. Lovejoy reiterated in substance the remarks just quoted, and said he claimed the right to discuss any subject, holding himself responsible to the law of the land. He did not ask the citizens of Alton to grant him the right,—he claimed this as the right of an American citizen. It has been charged by the abettors of the mob by which Mr. Lovejoy was killed, that he violated a pledge given when he came to Alton, not to publish Abolition doctrines, *but this is not true*. Lovejoy gave no pledge beyond what the language quoted would imply. He was not a man to promise he would not discuss any subject. He was as honest as he was fearless in the line of what to him was duty.

Another press was bought, shipped to Alton and put to work, the title of his paper being changed from the *St. Louis Observer* to the *Alton Observer*. The progressing interest, however, felt by Lovejoy in the subject of slavery, although yet calling himself a Colonizationist, was so strongly marked in his expressions, that it raised against him the old cry of Abolitionist, and it soon led to the destruction of this second press in Alton, on the night of the 22d of August, 1837. (I was absent from the city at this time, but take the statement following from persons present: The authorities of the city made no serious attempt to save this press or disperse the mob. John M. Krum was then Mayor of the city, and politely requested the gentlemen engaged in destroying the press and property to please disperse and go home, and he was answered that they would do so as soon as they had finished the little job they had on hand; and in turn they advised the Mayor to

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go home himself least he might get hurt, which was obeyed by the Mayor.) This act of the mob and the supineness of those in authority, and perhaps the constant thinking that he must have all the time kept up on the subject, brought Mr. Lovejoy to the front as an avowed Abolitionist, immediate and unconditional, and for him to decide was to act. He at once issued a call for a convention to assemble at Upper Alton, for the organization of a State Anti-Slavery Society, and on the 26th of October, 1837, the convention thus called convened at Upper Alton. I had returned to the city in September, and was present at this convention and amid all the scenes that so rapidly followed. A large number of persons not friendly to the call came into the convention, professing to adopt the sentiments, and enrolled themselves as members, and by their numbers succeeded in passing resolutions in opposition to the intentions of those who issued the call. U. F. Linder, a lawyer, and the then Attorney-General of the State, and John Hogan, a Methodist minister, were the most active and acknowledged leaders of those who were bent on obstructing the work of forming a State Anti-Slavery Society, for which the call had been issued. The meeting, however, came to its end somehow, but whether by adjournment or by all leaving the room, I do not now recollect. The next day, however, the friends of the call met at the home of Rev. T. B. Hurlburt, in Upper Alton, and about sixty names were recorded as organizing the State Anti-Slavery Society of Illinois, and elected their officers.

The following Sabbath, October 29th, the Rev. Edward Beecher, then president of Jacksonville College, preached one sermon in Lower Alton and one in Upper Alton, with great plainness of speech, on the subject of slavery; and on the Monday following, October 30th, several members of the late convention and many of the principal citizens of Alton met in the store of Alexander & Co., to consult on the expediency of establishing the press again in Alton, and if established, of defending it. After much deliberation, it was advised that Mr. Lovejoy go on and re-establish the press, and that it was the duty of friends of free discussion to stand to the last in his defence.

At a subsequent meeting held in the Riley building, the same day, but more publicly called than the former one, the same U. F. Linder and Rev. John Hogan were the prominent

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leaders of the opposition to Lovejoy—the minister Hogan especially, who said to Lovejoy that St. Paul when persecuted in one city fled to another, and that he (Lovejoy) should, as a Christian, follow Paul's example and flee from Alton. At this meeting also, U. F. Linder, Attorney-General, made a speech full of bitter denunciation of Lovejoy and of all Abolitionists, ministers of the Gospel, etc. All aimed to stir up the mob spirit and to intimidate and drive Lovejoy from the city. After he had concluded his effort, Mr. Lovejoy obtained the floor. He went to the desk in front of the audience, laid aside his overcoat, and in the most calm and deliberate manner addressed the meeting. He repelled the several charges and insinuations that had been made by the principal speakers, Linder and Hogan, saying that it was not true that he held in contempt the feelings and sentiments of this community in reference to the great question that was agitating it. He respected and appreciated the feelings of his fellow-citizens, and it was one of the most unpleasant and painful duties of his life, that he was called upon to differ from them. If they supposed he had published sentiments contrary to those generally held in this community, because he delighted in differing from them or in occasioning a disturbance, 7 they had entirely misapprehended him. But although he valued the good opinion of his fellow-citizens as highly as any man could, yet he was governed by higher considerations than either the favor or fear of man. He was impelled to the course he had taken because he feared God. As he should answer to God in the great day, he dare not abandon his sentiments or cease in every proper way to propagate them. He told the meeting he had not asked or desired any compromise; he had asked for nothing but to be protected in his rights which God had given him, and which were guaranteed to him by the Constitution of his country. He asked, "What infraction of the laws have I been guilty of? Whose good name have I injured? When and where have I published anything injurious to the reputation of Alton? Have I not, on the contrary, labored in common with the rest of my fellow-citizens to promote the reputation and the interest of Alton? What has been my offense? Put your finger upon it, define it, and I stand ready to answer for it. If I have been guilty, you can easily convict me. You have public sentiment in your favor. You have your juries, and you have your attorney, (looking at the attorney Linder,) and I have no doubt

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you can convict me; but if I have been guilty of no violation of the laws, why am I hunted up and down continually as a partridge upon the mountains? Why am I threatened with the tar barrel? Why am I waylaid from day to day and from night to night, and my life in jeopardy every hour?" He also said, "You have made up a False issue (as the lawyers say); there are not two parties in this matter between whom there can be a compromise." He planted himself upon his unquestionable rights; said the question to be decided was not whether a compromise could be effected, but whether he should be protected in the exercise and enjoyment of those rights. " *This is the question*: whether my property shall be protected; whether I shall be suffered to go home to my family at night without being assailed and threatened with tar and feathers and assassination; whether my afflicted wife, whose life has been in jeopardy from continued alarms and excitement, shall night after night be driven from a sick-bed into the garret to save her life from the brick-bats and violence of the mob. *That, sir, is the question?*" (Here his feelings overcame him and he burst into tears.) Many others in the room also wept, and for a time the sympathies of the meeting were with him. He apologized for having betrayed any weakness on the occasion; it was the allusion, he said, to his family that overcame his feelings. He assured them it was not from any fears on his part. He had no personal fears. Not that he felt able to contest this matter with the whole community—he knew perfectly well that he was not—but where should he go? He had been made to feel that if he was not safe in Alton, he would not be safe anywhere. He had recently visited St. Charles for his family, and was torn away from their embrace by a mob. He had been beset night and day in Alton. Now, if he should leave Alton and go elsewhere, violence might overtake him in his retreat, and he had no more claim for protection upon any other community than he had upon this. He had finally come to the determination, after consulting his friends and earnestly seeking counsel of God, to *remain in Alton*, and here to insist upon protection in the exercise of his rights. If the civil authorities refused to protect him, he must look to God for protection; and if he very soon found a grave in Alton, he was sure he should die in the exercise of his duty. His manner no man could describe. He was through it all calm, serious, firm

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and decided, no epithet or unkind word escaped him; yet, he knew he was among deadly enemies.

As soon as he left off speaking he left the building, and Linder again took the floor. He treated as hypocritical cant everything Mr. L. had said; he held him up as a fanatic, as a dangerous man in the community; he was violent against Mr. L. and his friends all, as Abolitionists.

The chairman, Hon. Cyrus Edwards, arose and in a very respectful but decided manner expressed his dissent from the sentiments just uttered. He urged the importance of maintaining peace and good order, and concluded by saying that he wished to take his stand before the country on that. But the meeting was carried on the side of Linder and his followers, and adjourned with the evident expressions of hostility and determination to ruin Lovejoy or to pursue him to the death, which was soon accomplished.

It had already been published in the city that Rev. Edward Beecher, who has before been alluded to, would preach a sermon in the Presbyterian church that evening, October 30th, on the times. Threats had been loudly made that he should not be allowed to do so. The Mayor had been informed of those threats and asked to protect the meeting, but made light of it; but the friends of free speech and good order did not feel so quiet about it, and proposed to the Mayor that they thought they had the power to enforce order, if with his consent they could carry their guns with them. This he objected to, but said we could privately take them to some place near the church, and if needed we could be called on, and he himself would attend the meeting as we urged him to do. We quietly took our guns to the adjoining house to the church, and not willing to trust the Mayor too far, put ourselves under the orders of one of our number, "him to obey." When Mr. Beecher had got about half through with his talk, a stone went through the side window at his head, but missed its mark. The stone had hardly stopped, when the call of our leader was made, "to arms," and a line was, *without the order of the Mayor*, almost in an instant formed in front of the church, extending beyond the front far enough to cover each side of the church.

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The result was to form the outsiders into as orderly a company of citizens as those on the inside—and Mr. Beecher *was* allowed to *finish* his discourse. But when he had concluded, and dismissed the congregation, and the citizens with arms in hand were returning to their rooms where they were in the habit of meeting, an altercation took place between the foremost of them and a company of the mobites, in which the breech of a gun, held in the hands of Moses G. Atwood, (if my memory serves me right,) was broken, and the mob were thereafter willing to allow the rest of the guns to pass along. Mr. Lovejoy was one of the number who held those guns, and on returning to his house from the rooms that night, he was waylaid, but passed without being known, as he had exchanged his broad-brim white 9 hat for the cap of a friend as a precaution. When the mob found that Mr. L. had passed them, they attacked his house; but seeing a rifle in Mr. L's hands, they prudently retired.

Agreeable to the decision at the Alexander store meeting, another press had been bought and was on the boat shipped from St. Louis to Alton. Precautions had been taken to have it arrive at such an hour as would most likely enable us to get it in store without its falling into the hands of the mob on the banks of the river. To this end a messenger had been sent below to meet the boat and ask the captain to lay by at the mouth of the Missouri till such time as would enable him to reach the dock at Alton about midnight. This was easily done, as the boat was owned by some of the parties interested in having the press re-established in Alton.

In the meantime, a company of about sixty volunteers had enrolled themselves under the laws as a military company and tendered their services to the Mayor to keep the peace of the city. This number of men had met for drill that evening at the store where the press would be landed, and they were armed with good rifles, all well loaded with ball. The captain of the boat was ordered to land the boxes containing the press, and if any attack was made on the boxes, to pull his boat out of harm's way as soon as possible. The sixty men inside had concluded to prolong their drill till the press was landed and stored, so they were divided into companies and stationed at points overlooking the boxes, and all

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had received orders that if any unauthorized persons should attempt to handle the boxes, they were to shoot at the boxes, and if anybody was in the way, it would appear to be the fault of the intruder. A committee of two were sent to call the Mayor and have him at the store, that, at the least, he might see it well done. He was a bachelor, and slept at his office near the store. To the first summons he promised to come, but was so long in doing it that a second was sent, with orders to come with him and show him the way. This was effective, and the committee and Mayor came in together. The press however was successfully landed, no demonstrations of a mob being made, unless perhaps a horn or two blown at a distance. The press was soon transferred from the boat to the fourth story of the warehouse belonging to Godfrey & Gilman, and our military company was left to continue their drill till morning or go to sleep as best they could.

This brings us in detail to the morning of the seventh of November, 1837. All was quiet in the city, the press was out of harm's way, boxed up and in the loft of a good warehouse, in the keeping of responsible men, and no demonstration towards its being unpacked or put in motion. As night approached, nearly all of the men who had given their names to form that military company went to the building containing the press, one loft of which was our drill room, and were drilled there until nine o'clock. Then, as no one apprehended any trouble, the company was dismissed, and each was about going quietly home, when Mr. Gilman, one of the owners of the store, asked if some few of the number would not volunteer to remain through the night, as they could be made comfortable for sleeping on the goods in the 10 store, and he was intending to stay himself as a precaution against any one breaking into the store and committing any depredation. Nineteen men volunteered to stay, and with Mr. Gilman, made twenty in all left in the store. Within a short time appearances seemed to indicate that the mob were gathering, but no one thought of any serious trouble till Edward Keating, a lawyer, and Henry W. West, a merchant, came to the building and asked to be admitted to see Mr. Gilman, the owner. Some one not possessed of much judgment (for they were both known to favor the mob) allowed them to come in. They, of course, soon took in the small number left to guard the building

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and press, and they then informed Mr. Gilman that unless the press was given up to the *gentlemen* outside, the building would be burned over our heads and every man killed. Consultation was had inside and they were promptly given to understand that the press and the store would be defended. Some of us were for keeping these parties prisoners till morning, that they might share our fate, if need be.

Early in the night, after the main body had left, the twenty men remaining in the building had elected Deacon Enoch Long to act as their Captain, if anything should occur requiring concert of action; and as he had seen service in the war of 1812–15, we supposed him the most fit man for such a case, and it was by his orders that these two spies were allowed to depart. About as soon as the mob could get their report, we understood by the wild shouts among them that our numbers were satisfactory to that side, at least, and that we would have work to do. A council was called by the inside party, to take measures for defence, and some advised most vigorous defence, and as severe punishment to the mob, if we were attacked, as possible; but our Captain overruled, saying our course would be a useless sacrifice of human life, and if the mob, whose shot and stones had began to come, should persist in their attack, after being counseled of the consequences, then he would select some one man to fire into the mob, and no doubt they would instantly disperse. He was promptly told by some that they would not be so selected, that if they fired into that mob, which they were anxious to do, they should fire with all present. And some took themselves to different parts of the building to defend on their own account, but there was thereafter no concert of action by the defenders. The building was in fact two buildings with ends to the street and to the river, and at one side was a vacant lot. The building was of stone, over one hundred feet long at the side toward the vacant lot. The attacking party were covered by this stone wall. The ends of the buildings on street and river would show as two stores—three stories on the street and four at the river end, owing to the formation of the land. The two upper stories were lofts or garrets, the roofs of each resting on the middle wall, and no communication between them without going down the stairs of one, and up those of the other. In the loft of one of these stores was

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stored stone jugs and jars. Reuben Gerry had stationed himself in this loft, while the writer was in the other. The mob were working in the street in front of both, but more particularly under Gerry's part, for the door they 11 were trying to force was more directly under him. In his room, and my own also, were doors fronting the street, under the roof, with small glass windows in the doors, but no other windows. Mr. Gerry had opened the door in his room over the head of the mob, and was amusing himself and them by rolling the jugs and crocks out of the door down on their heads. From my standpoint I was getting the benefit of the effect, but could not communicate with Gerry nor let him know that I was there. The mob for a time tried throwing up stones, but they did not go up with the same effect that the jugs went down, and one of their number was selected to cross the street and shoot whoever might be throwing down the jugs whenever he should again appear. By the time the party had got to his appointed place where he could command Gerry's door, my rifle was through the glass forming the top of my door and resting on the sash, perfectly covering the man in the street. I knew him well, and saw him clearly, for it was a beautiful moonlight night. Two men had come up to the room where I was, to get a good sight of the mob, and the street was full. They were asking me not to shoot for we were getting the worst of the fight already. My promise was ready given not to shoot unless the man raised his gun to shoot Gerry; if he did, he could never perform the act. But Gerry knew of the preparations to shoot him, and did not know of my position, neither could I let him know, so he kept out of sight and saved the life of one who bragged the next day that he was the one that shot Lovejoy, perhaps not one hour later. I soon heard Mr. Gerry going down stairs and immediately went down myself and we met on the floor below; and while we were discussing the situation with the view of returning to our stations, he to roll jugs and I to cover him, we heard the report of a gun close to us from the inside and the exclamation that a man on the outside was shot. Our captain had put in force his saving theory and had selected one man to fire, and that shot had killed a man by the name of Bishop, on the outside. The ball had entered the top of his shoulder while he was stooping to pick up a stone and gone nearly through him lengthways. I heard *one* call and ask "Who fired that gun?" and—answered "*I did.*" I went to the window and saw four men pick up

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Bishop, one by each arm and one by each leg, and carry him to Dr. Hart's office, nearly opposite, but I subsequently learned the man was dead when they reached the office with him. The shooting of this man seemed to have the effect contemplated by our captain, and the mob withdrew. But the lull was short; they soon returned reinforced, and with savage yells, threatened to fire the building and shoot every "d—d Abolitionist" as we were all then called, as we might leave the building. Even at this time no orders were given for any concentrated fire on the mob; but many shots were fired, but with poor effect. The Mayor came in the building and we asked him to take us outside to face the mob and order them to disperse, or else in their hearing order us to fire, and we would pledge our lives to clean them out, but he prudently and cautiously, and for our good, declined, saying he had too high a regard for our lives to do that, but at the same time he justified our right of defence. When he returned to the mob from us he could do nothing. His former acts in submitting to being snubbed by the mob, who before his face was destroying the press formerly alluded to, took from him all power now, and he had to look on and see the work of death and of ruin. About this time the mob had approached the building with a long ladder; and operating on the side of the house next the vacant lot, where there was no opening in the long wall, they had got the ladder to the roof and a man on the ladder with material to set the house on fire on the roof. When volunteers were called for to go out and shoot the man off the ladder, the men on the lower floor,—Mr. Lovejoy, Amos B. Rod and Royal Weller—stepped out of the door towards the river, and as they stepped clear of the door to get at the side of the building, Mr. Lovejoy received five bullets in his body and limbs from behind a pile of lumber near by where men were concealed, probably for the purpose. Mr. Roff was also shot in the leg; and Mr. Weller, also, was shot in *his* leg, and had a bullet through his hat that just cleared his head. Mr. Lovejoy walked in and up stairs one story to the office, saying as he went, "I am shot! I am shot! I am dead!" He was met at the door of the room by all on that floor, and died without a struggle and without speaking again. The two that were wounded also got back up stairs to the same room. Very soon there appeared on the river side of the building the same two men who were in the beginning admitted and let out of the building—Keating and West—and calling the

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attention of whoever was in sight, displayed a white handkerchief and called for Gilman, and said that the building was on fire, but the Boys would put it out if he would give up the press; that was all they wanted, and would not destroy anything else, nor hurt any one if the building was surrendered. Mr. Gilman then concluded that inasmuch as there was great value in the building of goods, and also the interests of many firms all over the State were jeopardized, and Mr. Godfrey, his partner, not present, that to save all these interests it was his judgment the buildings and press had best be abandoned to the mob. Others, under the circumstances, could say nothing, and so it was resolved to give it up, and the spies were so ordered to notify their fellows. Accordingly our guns were secreted in different places, and all of the number left the building in a body, except Lovejoy, dead; Roff and Weller wounded, and S. J. Thompson, who remained till the mob entered; and as the men passed by that vacant lot, it seemed as if a hundred bullets were shot at them from the mob congregated at the other and higher end of the lot, and being thus elevated the balls sung harmless by, to the river. The escaped congregated in a hardware store on Second street, a little removed from the scene of action, and after a while each went to their several homes, and the work of destruction was completed on the press and on the fortunes of the city for all future time.

The next morning, on returning to the scenes of the night, the dead body of Lovejoy lay where it fell and the dead body of Bishop in Dr. Hart's office. Friends procured a hearse and removed the body of Mr. Lovejoy to his late residence, his wife being stricken by the blow to utter helplessness. Owen Lovejoy met the corpse of his brother at the door. Mr. Lovejoy was buried, 13 I think, the day following. Rev. Thomas Lippincott made the prayer at his funeral, and never a word or intimation but that the death was a natural one. It was a rainy, drizzly day,—fit one for such a funeral. No word or allusion to mob violence, and so Lovejoy was buried without inquest or word to tell the manner of his death. After the body was taken home from the place of death, Owen Lovejoy, the brother of the martyred, standing over the dead body, vowed that from henceforth he would fight the cursed institution that had killed his brother. The country knows well how that vow was kept.

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From this sad end of Lovejoy we must follow the closing events of mob violence in the City of Alton. First in the chain of events was the assembling of the next Municipal Grand Jury, which was the January term of 1838. A sufficient number friendly to the mob had been brought together to form the Grand Jury, to have things their own way, and about the first business they did was to frame an indictment against twelve of the number of those engaged on the 7th of November in defending the press and store. That indictment, with its two counts, will be found in the book I herewith submit to your custody, and lest the book might be lost or mislaid, and the indictment as a matter of history pass out of knowledge, it seems to me to be proper to reproduce it in full in this history, and it is in the words following, to wit:

State Of Illinois, *City of Alton* —ss.

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected, and sworn, in and for the body of the City of Alton, in the County of Madison, in the name and by the authority of the people of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths present, that *Enoch Long, Amos B. Roff, George H. Walworth, George H. Whitney, William Harned, John S. Noble, James Morse, junior, Henry Tanner, Royal Weller, Reuben Gerry, and Thaddeus B. Hurlburt, and Winthrop S. Gilman*, all late of the City of Alton, in the county of Madison, and State of Illinois, on the seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred thirty-seven, with force and arms, at the city of Alton aforesaid, and within the corporate limits of said city, unlawfully, riotously, and routously, and in a violent and tumultuous manner, resisted and opposed an attempt then and there being made to break up and destroy a printing press, then and there being found the goods and chattels of contrary to the form of the statute in such cases made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the people of the State of Illinois.

And the Jurors aforesaid, in the name and by the authority aforesaid, upon their oaths aforesaid, do further present, that *Enoch Long, Amos B. Roff, George H. Walworth, George H. Whitney, William Harned, John S. Noble, James Morse, junior, Henry Tanner,*

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Royal Weller, Reuben Gerry, Thaddeus B. Hurlburt and Winthrop S. Gilman, all late of the city of Alton, in the county of Madison, and State of Illinois, on the seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, with force and arms, at the city of Alton aforesaid, and within the corporate limits of said city, unlawfully, riotously, routously, and in a violent and tumultuous manner *defended and resisted* an attempt then and there being made by divers persons, to the jurors aforesaid unknown, to force open and enter the store-house of Benjamin Godfrey and Winthrop S. Gilman, there situate, contrary to the form of the 14 statute in such case made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the People of the State of Illinois.

Francis B. Murdock,

Prosecuting Attorney for the Municipal Court of the City of Alton. Endorsed upon the back
“A true bill.

Thomas G. Hawley, Foreman.”

On this indictment at that term of the Court, one of the number, Winthrop S. Gilman, whose case had been separated from the others for that purpose, and who owned with Godfrey the store that he was indicted for defending, was tried, the trial using up a full day till late in the evening, and was by the jury acquitted; and on the rendering of the verdict a *nolle prosequi* was entered as against the other eleven, closing on January 17, A. D. 1838.

In the same book herewith presented to you, will be found an indictment against several of those composing the riot of November 7th, and the report of the trial thereon, and their acquittal; for the jurors who tried them were part and parcel of the lot of rioters, who, however, swore on being questioned as to fitness for jurors, that they knew nothing of the case and had made up no mind about it. The foreman, Botkin, was wounded among the mob on the night of the seventh, with shot only; if the gun had held a ball he probably would not have sat on the jury.

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Thus ended the Alton trials, *but not the trials of Alton*, for the city has never recovered from the deadly blow then struck against its good name and fame. Most of the actors in these scenes have passed away. Many of those engaged with the mob, it is known, met violent deaths in other places, and prison doors closed on some of the others. Some have filled up the measure of their days in the city they disgraced. Some in other places have passed into that oblivion due them. Most of the defenders have passed away—a few live. I herewith append the names of all, and so far as known if living and where, or if known to be dead—and I believe no evil reports (saving the indictment alluded to) have been brought against the names of any of them. The names of the twenty men that night in the building here follows:

Elijah P. Lovejoy—killed by the mob November 7, 1837.

Amos B. Roff—then wounded, since dead.

Royal Weller—then wounded, since dead.

William Harned—dead.

James Morse, Jr.—dead.

John S. Noble—dead.

Edward Breath—(subsequently missionary to Persia), dead.

George H. Walworth—dead.

J. C. Woods—dead.

George H. Whitney—dead.

Reuben Gerry—dead.

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Winthrop S. Gilman—living in New York City.

Enoch Long—if living, is in Galena.

*

* Left the building early in the evening.

George T. Brown—living in Alton.

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Samuel J. Thompson—(residence unknown).

H. D. Davis—do not know if living or dead.

D. F. Randall—do not know if living or dead.

D. Burt Loomis—believed to be living, residence unknown.

Thaddeus B. Hurlburt—residence in Upper Alton.

Henry Tanner—resides in Buffalo, N.Y.

In the book that I deposit with you with this history will be found much evidence corroborating the leading facts herein contained, given under oath on the trials therein reported. The speech of Mayor Krum and his testimony covers some portions of the history more minutely than I have done, and my object in all is that I may save from oblivion the events that should never be allowed to die, and to bear testimony that the eight names found in the list not indicted were equally worthy of that honor as were the twelve selected, and the why no one can tell, that would tell, for all were well known.

I close with a passing remark upon the place where the martyr Lovejoy sleeps his quiet sleep. For a long time no stone marked the place, and now but a small head-stone to

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guide the few who would seek his resting place. A monument suitable to such a man, who dared to die in the defence of liberty of the press and of speech at that early day, should be erected, to mark the change at least that has since taken place; and if erected where he rests, it would be the prominent object for all passing boats on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, passing up to Alton on the Mississippi or entering the Missouri at its junction with the Mississippi. *Friends of law and of freedom, friends of free speech and press!* cannot this be done, cannot this monument be erected, even at this late day, to the memory of as pure a man as ever gave his life for a principle? If this can be done on the anniversary of his death, though over forty years ago, and on the 7th November, 1878, such monument be dedicated, then this history will not have been written in vain. Who will *honor* themselves by *honoring* the memory of Lovejoy, and moving in so good a cause? With you I leave it. Gladly would I coöperate with any and all to that end, and glad if permitted to witness such a result before *I, too*, pass away; and with these thoughts I close the story of as great a wrong as was ever perpetrated upon man for his faith sake. I know that pioneers in reforms have ever been, and ever will be, sufferers; as the pioneers in the settling of a new country take upon themselves the burden and heat of the day, leaving it to those who come after to reap its good. So has it ever been with those who seeing and feeling the great principles of human advancement and human good. They, too, moving out in advance of their fellows, reap contumely, reproach and often death, until the reform they advocate begins to call in popular aid, when those who watch for the turning of the tide are ready to shout its praises, as if it had ever been their own ideal of good, and with their dish right side up, reap the good of its maturity. So has it ever been, and so it probably ever will be. But can there not be a monument to mark the grave of the first who fell in this reform that the good might come to the others?

Henry Tanner.